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March's transmit day for
Wednesday, February 22nd.

MACC Events

Registration is Open! 2017 Midwest Road Shows

Hays, KS - March 14
Topeka, KS - March 15
Cedar Rapids, IA - March 21
Des Moines, IA - March 22

www.maccroadshows.com

Registration is Open! 2017 MACC Users Group

April 17 - 20
Chandler, Arizona

www.maccusersgroup.com

Trivia Winner

Congratulations to KanOkla's
Marcy Bredengerd who won
this month's MACC Trivia
Challenge Contest!

HUBB Homework and we want to hear from YOU!

by Craig Aman, President & CEO



January can be a long, cold month, but here at MACC we made it go by quickly as we diligently worked on two important projects. First, if your company is planning to receive Connect America Funds, we created a tool you will need to file deployment data through USAC's HUBB portal. The second project is our annual client survey which is now available for you to complete. Please read on for more information on these important topics.

We have the tools you'll need

I'm sure most of you are very familiar with the Connect America program and its March 1 filing deadline for qualifying locations. At MACC, we keep a close eye on the regulatory horizon to ensure your company has the tools it needs to meet all reporting requirements. For the upcoming Connect America filing, the current version of Customer Master has the ability to provide the vast majority of information your company will need and the previously mentioned tool will enable you to provide the rest.

There is a bit of a background story with the timing of the tool's release. Because USAC did not define what was needed upon making the announcement for the coming changes, MACC's ability to prepare for the filing requirements was limited until they were broadcast via a USAC webinar on January 5. MACC's Product Development Team immediately analyzed the requirements and found only one needed data element, broadband deployment date, was not available in Customer Master. We then spent the remainder of January creating the tool that will help you meet the reporting requirements.

The tool we created is a script that is fully coded and tested to be used for the March 1 filing. To accommodate future filings, the needed functionality will be included in the 17.1 release of Customer Master. If your company needs the script, it is now available so please contact your MACC Software Support Representative. The Software Support Team is ready to help you complete this important task.

We also created a document that fully explains how Customer Master and the new script can be used to complete the March 1 filing. The document can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/zrrl5lw>

Your opinion matters

Each year we conduct a survey to ensure our products and services are meeting and exceeding your expectations. I am proud to say MACC has averaged, over the last 10 years, a score of 4.32 on a 5-point scale.

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Featured MACC employee for February

February's featured employee is Lori Bayne. Lori is the Product Owner for the Customer Master software package. She researches enhancement requests from software support, trainers, and from the companies using Customer Master and determines how we can incorporate it into the software. Lori also tracks new reporting requirements from the FCC that impact the use of CM.



Q. When did you start at MACC

A. September 1999

Q. What's your favorite part of your job?

A. I have always loved working with our customers through the years as a Training Conversion Analyst, Account Manager, and now as a Product Owner. I enjoy getting the user's perspective on how to incorporate changes and modifications to the software to meet their needs.

Q. Can you please tell us about your family?

A. I've been married to a very helpful and patient man named Kevin for almost 15 years. We got married at 'Anaeho'omalu Bay on the Big Island of Hawaii at sunset.

Q. What do you do for fun in your free time?

A. As many of you can tell by the monthly recipes that appear in this newsletter...I love to cook and bake

Q. If you could travel anywhere to spend a week on vacation, where would it be?

A. Anywhere warm, tropical, and sunny....I love palm trees and sandy beaches! But my husband really wants to go on an Alaskan cruise sometime.

Q. What's the best career advice you've ever received?

A. Be motivated...give it your all...do whatever it takes to expand your knowledge and achieve what is needed.

Q. What's your favorite quote?

A. Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you'll look back and realize they were the big things – Kurt Vonnegut

Q. The one person I've always wanted to meet?

A. This is difficult question...if we are talking about people that inspire my interest in cooking, it would be Paula Deen or Ree Drummond, the Pioneer Woman. I also love the show Fixer Upper, so I'd love to meet Chip and Joanna Gaines. There might be a trip south in my future to Pawhuska, Oklahoma or Waco, Texas!

Q. If you could add any food to the MACC vending machines, what would it be?

A. Though I pretty much only drink water, occasionally I just need a plain Sprite.

President's Message

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Even with scores like that, we won't rest on our laurels, because we want to ensure we continue to provide the same excellent service and products you have come to expect from MACC.

We use the annual results to help guide us to create products to help you grow your business. The results are also used to help us make adjustments in the way we are providing service to you.

Since we take the results so seriously, I urge you to take some time to complete the survey, and really give us honest feedback on how we are doing. We truly want the suggestions – as well as positive feedback – we can share with our teams.

To take the survey, please visit: www.maccnet.com/survey. If you would prefer a paper copy, the online survey page also has a link to a printable version.

Decadent Chocolate Cake

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cocoa powder
 2 teaspoons baking soda
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1 teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canola oil
 2 large eggs
 1 cup buttermilk (can use milk with 1 Tablespoon white vinegar or lemon juice added to it)
 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla
 1 cup hot water

Chocolate Buttercream Frosting:

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups butter, softened
 1 cup cocoa powder
 5-6 cups powdered sugar
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cream, half & half or milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray 2- 8 or 9 inch round cake pans with non-stick cooking spray.

In a large bowl, stir together flour, sugar, cocoa, baking soda, baking powder and salt. If you wish, these ingredients can be sifted together.

In a mixing bowl, beat oil, eggs, buttermilk, and vanilla for 1 minute. Add dry ingredients to wet mixture and stir until combined. Pour in hot water and continue to mix until smooth.

Pour batter evenly into the prepared round cake pans. Bake for 22-27 minutes, until toothpick or cake tester placed in center comes out clean. Let cakes cool completely before frosting.

For Chocolate Buttercream Frosting:

In a mixing bowl, cream together butter, cocoa, powdered sugar, and cream until light and fluffy. (I add the extra cup, 6th cup, of powdered sugar to make a thicker frosting, but more cream or milk can be added to get to your desired consistency.) Remove cakes from pan and frost each layer with frosting. Cake can be topped with chocolate shavings, sprinkles or other candy decoration, if desired.

I think the cake is even better if baked and assembled the day before and then served the next day.

Recipe courtesy of Lori Bayne, MACC's Customer Master Product Owner.

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Send it to Ryan at rthompson@maccnet.com.

Combine two customer favorites to boost your bottom line

by Ryan Thompson, Creative Services Manager

Do you like gift cards and instant gratification? Who doesn't? For this reason, special offers combining these two customer favorites can deliver outstanding results when done correctly. A MACC client in Michigan recently took this approach and ran a special using gift cards that provided a nice boost to their internet subscriptions.

In December, Michigan Broadband Services gave new Internet customers a \$50 Visa gift card if they subscribed before the end of the year. To promote the special offer, the company used a full-color insert in its December bills.

The company's Manager of Customer Services, Lori Van, said December is a tough month for new accounts as would-be customers are spending their money on Christmas gifts and other holiday expenses. With the time of year in mind, Lori had modest expectations for the promotion.

"Originally, I was hoping we would bring in five new customers," she said. "We ended up with 19 installs. That's unheard for the month of December as it is always a slow month."

During the promotion's planning and implementation, Michigan Broadband Services took several important steps to increase the odds of success.

- It was a limited-time offer to prompt fast action. Lori said most of the calls came right away and 16 of the new subscriptions came before Christmas.
- New customers had the joy of instant gratification as the gift cards were distributed as soon as they signed up for services.
- The company used physical gift cards purchased through a local credit union. Customers love receiving something "real" they can put into their wallet and spend later.
- Customers agreed to a 24-month service agreement to receive the cards.
- To keep expenses down, the company used Customer Master's ability to send inserts to only selected accounts. In this case, only 1,800 non-Internet customers received the insert.

"It was absolutely a good investment for the company," she said.

The company also did some great things in terms of customer service. Two day installs were guaranteed, and in most cases, the installation was complete a day after the new customer subscribed. Once the work was complete, customer service representatives sent thank you cards to the new subscribers to show the company's appreciation.

With the success of the first gift card promotion in mind, Lori said the company has a Refer-a-Friend special planned for February. In this case, both the new customer, and the friend who does the referring, will receive a \$50 gift card.

"For us, February is usually when business picks up again with people getting their tax returns," she said. "It's a great time for a promotion."

Would you like to see similar results?

If you'd like to implement a similar program at your company, please contact the Creative Services Team for more information. We can help with planning, implementing, and even measuring the results of your next special offer.

Keep your skills in tune when you join MACC on the road this spring!

by Kristi Rounds, Creative Services Coordinator

MACC is hitting the road to bring you training and the latest news on our products and services. Starting in mid-March, our Midwest Road Shows will be in Kansas and Iowa. After that, we're heading West to the MACC Users Group in Chandler, Arizona. Details and registration for both events are now available.

Remember that each of these events are open to all MACC clients, regardless of where your company is located. Wherever you call home, we are always happy to see you at our spring events.

2016 MACC Midwest Road Show

Complete details, and a form to register for the Road Shows, are available at: www.maccroadshows.com. This year's Midwest Road Show will make the following stops:

- Topeka, Kansas on March 15th
- Hays, Kansas on March 16th
- Cedar Rapids, Iowa on March 21
- Des Moines, Iowa on March 22

Attend one of our Road Shows and you won't miss a beat on the latest features in MACC's products. Road Show agenda topics include...

- Customer Master Year in Review
- Customer Master What's Coming in 17.1
- Customizing CM and AM
- Financial Wizard, FCC Updates and much more!

2016 MACC Users Group

Do you want to be a MACC star? Then plan to attend this year's MACC Users Group held April 17-20 at the Wild Horse Pass Hotel & Casino in Chandler, Arizona. Complete details, and a form to register for the Users Group, are available on the event's website: www.maccusersgroup.com.

The event is split into two parts, one for Customer Master and one for Accounting Master. This arrangement allows for more in-depth discussion on each product. Attendees have the option to sign-up for sessions on either of the individual products or can attend both at a combined rate.

Questions about either event?

If you have any questions on the MACC Road Show or Users Group, please contact Kristi Rounds at 402-533-5184 or krounds@maccnet.com or JoEllen Maras at 402.533.5117 or jmaras@maccet.com. We look forward to seeing you on the road!

Welcome aboard Christensen Communications

Minnesota-based Christensen Communications Company has recently completed its conversion to MACC's BSS/OSS platform. The company is now using MACC's products for billing, customer care and facilities management.

With its roots going back to 1903, Christensen Communications provides telecommunication services to Madelia, St. James, and La Salle, Minnesota. The company uses state-of-the-art fiber and wireless technology to deliver these services to its customers. In addition to ensuring its communities have the technology they need, Christensen Communications emphasizes customer service. Its slogan is "Where service is our most important product." The company's employees strive to make this slogan a reality.

By selecting MACC, Christensen Communications is partnering with another company that puts great focus on delivering the services its customers need and backing them up with outstanding support.

Brent Christensen, Christensen Communications' Vice President, said, "We evaluated several companies before we chose MACC. At the end of the day, MACC was the best fit for our company. The MACC team was extremely professional during the conversion process. They made sure that our staff had a good understanding of the product and how to use it."

"Christensen Communications is a progressive, community-focused company and we are honored MACC was chosen to be its new BSS/OSS platform," said Craig Aman, MACC's President and CEO. "We look forward to providing solutions to the Christensen Communications team that empowers them to continue to deliver the high-level of service for which they are known."

Tips for implementing the new 'My Time' feature in CM

by Julie Riecken, Training Support Manager

For those of you who attended the What's New in Customer Master 16.2 session at MBTC, you may remember that we discussed a new feature called My Time. There are many aspects to this tool. In order to use this fully, you'll need to contact your Software Support Representative to have the feature enabled.

The first step in setting up the process is to determine what rounding method is to be used. Do you round labor to the nearest 5 minutes, 10 minutes, quarter hour, or half hour. This will help the system calculate time based on a start and stop time.

You may then identify which payroll companies are associated with which employees. You can also grant rights to employees to enter time for specific departments, work groups and employees.

Once you have those settings in place, you are ready to proceed with adding time. Use the My Time button to enter the screen. A grid will display time that's already been entered. If you are in service order or trouble, clicking on My Time to enter time will bring in the corresponding SO or TT number, in addition to some other fields. You also have plenty of room to add comments regarding the time that's being entered. If you are utilizing work order job costing, you can add the work order number.

After time is entered, you may export the time to Accounting Master as a payroll row. Once in Accounting Master, time will need to be approved before payroll is processed.

Tired of Ransomware?

by MACC's Technical Support Team

MACC has recently partnered with DELL to bring to you its latest endpoint security solution, Dell Threat Defense, a new advanced-threat prevention solution specifically designed for the needs of growing businesses with limited or no in-house IT staff.

According to Dell:

Threat Defense uses artificial intelligence and machine learning to proactively prevent, rather than reactively detect, advanced persistent threats and malware including zero day and targeted attacks such as spear phishing or ransomware. The solution offers a significantly higher level of protection, stopping 99 percent of malware execution, far above the average 50 percent efficacy rating of many traditional anti-virus solutions.

Many small and medium businesses have limited or no in-house IT staff, and are under-equipped to keep on top of the rapidly-evolving threat landscape and determine how best to protect their business. In the recently released Dell [Data Security Survey](#), 69 percent of small and mid-market businesses say that data security is a burden on their company's time and budget. In addition, 65 percent are holding back plans to make their workforce more mobile due to security concerns. SMBs need to prioritize data security to protect their assets, but they also need to be productive in order to grow their business.

In fact, according to the 2014 [Dell Evolving Workforce Study](#), 64 percent of employees globally conduct at least some business at home after business hours. Threat Defense provides businesses with an easy and manageable way to enable their workforce to be mobile and secure, while reducing the resources commonly required to implement security solutions. It features an intuitive, cloud-based management console, enabling updates and compliance reporting through a single management pane.

Threat Defense reflects the multi-platform reality of the modern workplace with compatibility on a range of Dell and non-Dell devices. Additional features include:

- **Lightweight Footprint:** Threat Defense consumes only one to three percent of CPU resources, a much lower footprint than traditional anti-virus solutions, which means better performance for end users. In addition, as the solution does not rely on signature updates, it does not require a continual network connection to the internet to detect threats.
- **Safe-List Flexibility:** To allow for direct control over known secure files and apps, Threat Defense enables administrators to safe-list files at the policy level or via a signed certificate where no threat action will be taken against the file or application.
- **Advanced Script Control and Malware Analysis:** Threat Defense offers additional script control that prevents malicious ActiveScripts and PowerShell from running. IT administrators can also upload a suspicious file to the cloud for analysis, enabling them to analyze threat vectors they are facing and take better preventative measures.

The Dell Threat Defense solution is available through a subscription-based model to provide small businesses with a way to manage resources as they grow.

For more information on this technology or other questions you may have, feel free to contact your MACC Tech Support Team and we will be happy to help! We can be reached at 402-533-5300 or via email at macctechns@macnet.com.